



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

DEC 13 2012

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you for your letter of November 1. We appreciate your commitment to understanding the events surrounding the September 11 attacks on our mission in Benghazi. We share that commitment.

As Secretary Clinton said on November 8, it is critical that we do all we can to fully understand how security was breached in Benghazi, how to reduce the risks our diplomats and development experts face, and how to ensure they have the resources they need. To that end, the Department continues to work with our interagency partners to compile the most accurate picture we can of the events of September 11. Alongside our interagency colleagues, we are undertaking a comprehensive review of the security posture at our overseas posts to identify and implement further measures, where necessary, to bolster the safety of our facilities and personnel.

Your letter raises several specific questions regarding the Benghazi attack. Pursuant to statute, the Secretary has convened an Accountability Review Board (ARB) led by Ambassador Thomas Pickering and including Admiral Michael Mullen, Catherine Bertini, Richard Shinnick, and Hugh Turner III. The ARB is working to address many of the questions raised in your letter, including whether our security systems and procedures in Benghazi were adequate, whether those systems and procedures were properly implemented, and any lessons that may be relevant to our work around the world. We intend to share our response to the ARB's findings with Congress, and would encourage you to withhold any final conclusions about the Benghazi attack until you have had an opportunity to review that information. We believe their work will be helpful in addressing your inquiries.

The Honorable
Mike Kelly,
House of Representatives.

The Department shares your commitment to a full and accurate accounting of the facts. To that end, we continue to cooperate with the oversight efforts of several Committees of jurisdiction, including providing extensive briefings, background records and Department officials for interviews and hearings.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DS Adams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David S. Adams
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs